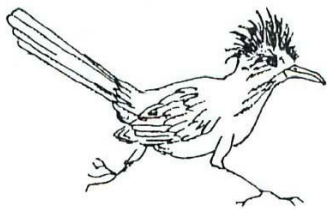


Season 3, Volume 1

Big Bend National Park's Volunteer Newsletter

January 10, 2004



## Happy New Year!



Whit & Samantha (left) drove from Castolon, while Royce & Royann (above) came from RGV to enjoy the December potluck dinner. The game for the month was "I never did....".



Creative & talented VIP's, Carol Schemm (left) and Lee Pytel (right), each donated wonderful hand made items for the Holiday Auction on December 4th.



Big Bend's annual **Holiday Dinner**, on December 16, was a festive occasion. Volunteers exchanged their brown park uniforms for gala attire, and joined park staff for a wonderful turkey or quiche dinner. This event was sponsored by Casa Grande, the park's community organization. The Terlingua Choir provided beautiful Christmas music for our enjoyment while we dined.



Ginny & Jim Herrick



June & Tony Jacobson



Steve McAllister & Missy Powell

### Volunteer Notes

- Once your paperwork for reimbursement has been submitted, please wait 2-3 days and then see Terry Boren, in person, in the Administration Office, Mon-Fri, 8-5, to sign for

### A sad goodbye to Volunteers leaving by the end of January:

Bob & Carol Schemm  
Jim & Ginny Herrick  
Joe & Lee Pytel  
Tony & June Jacobson  
Pete & Marsha Coates  
Chuck Gorecki  
Nettie & Giff Babcock  
Becky Reiger  
Katrina Jensen  
Alicia Riley  
Matt Sandate

*Thanks for all your help!*

### Persimmon Gap

Mark Kirtley- Visitor Center  
Nettie and Giff Babcock- Visitor Center

### Castolon

Nancy Daniel- Interpretation  
Chuck Gorecki- Interpretation  
Steve Harper & Judy Brinkerhoff- Camp Host & Backcountry  
Whitney Hibbard & Samantha Schroeder- Camp Host & Backcountry

### Rio Grande Village

June & Tony Jacobson- Backcountry  
Barbara & Bill Baldwin- Camp Hosts  
Royann & Royce Brockett- Camp Hosts  
Marsha & Pete Coates- Visitor Center

### Chisos Basin

Ginny & Jim Herrick- Visitor Center  
Dana & Les Over- Camp Hosts  
Kay & Rich Gordon- Camp Hosts

### Panther Junction

Steven Wick- Resource Management  
Bob & Scarlett Wirt- Resource Management  
Brian Finn- IT Assistant

## Volunteer Corner

**Tony and June Jacobson** are living proof that if you want something badly, are patient, and work towards your goal, you can achieve your dreams. Their story really started in Westminster, Maryland, when Tony was 17 and June only 16 years old. When Tony first met June, he knew that she was the woman he wanted. He persistently pursued her, and when he was 19 and she was only 18, they were married. They might not have married quite so young, but June's family was moving to Florida. Her choice was to marry Tony or move to Florida. June was just out of high school and neither one of them had any money. Tony's uncle loaned them the \$5.00 for the marriage license, and other family members donated items to help the young couple set up housekeeping.

Tony started working as a mechanic for a trucking company, but by the time he was in his early 20's, he been promoted to service manager for Volkswagen. He managed body shops, worked with importers, and especially enjoyed bringing failing companies back to life. Tony says he always made more with his mouth and a pencil, than with his hands.

In 1959, their daughter, Dawn, was born. Even though she is their only daughter, Dawn was not raised as an only child. Different family circumstances caused Tony and June's 8 siblings came to live with them, bringing the total of children in the household to 9. June was working outside the home as an executive secretary during much of this time. But in her early 30's, she quit work to stay home with all the children. On the weekends the house was also full of friends and relatives. They had lots of horses and always had a group of friends over to ride. June and Tony both loved having lots of people around.

In 1971, the Jacobson's went to Durango, Colorado, for an 11 day wilderness expedition ride. When they arrived, they discovered that there were not enough wranglers. Tony offered their services, since he, June, and Dawn all knew how to ride. Tony decided then that he wanted to be a cowboy. June told Tony that if he would continue supporting the family, they would all work toward that goal.

When Dawn went to college, she encouraged her mother to find something to do away from the house. June decided to go to college and, at the age of 39, she was president of her class at Catonsville Community College. She discovered her love for science and attended the University of Maryland to earn a Nursing Degree. For the next 20 years, she loved working in the medical field.

In 1991, Tony quit work, bought an RV, and he & June moved to Tucson. Tony did various jobs in the Tucson area and, from May to October, he led horseback rides. As soon as he turned 62, he retired. June has been persistent with finding jobs for her husband. She scouts available resources, including Workamper News, to find places in need of people with Tony's cowboy skills. He loves introducing children to horses and saddle, and is extremely gifted at leading tours. They have worked at the Circle K Ranch in Colorado, the Mystic Saddle Ranch in Stanley, Idaho, and the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary in Hot Springs, South Dakota. Their backcountry job in the RGV area of Big Bend was a dream come true. Tony and June had visited Lajitas many years ago and wanted to return here. They sent an application and waited 3 years for a position to be available.

Because of back problems, June is no longer able to ride horses. When she asked her doctor what she could do to help, he told her to walk and never quit. She has been hiking ever since. Both June and Tony have hiked through Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona. Big Bend offers both of them the opportunity to pursue the things they love to do. Visitors can look forward to seeing Tony on his horse with June hiking behind throughout the Boquillas district of the park.



Tony has a rapport with the horses, and watching him is like watching *The Horse Whisperer*.



# Something a little different from Campground Host and Interpretation

## Part-time volunteers



After working for 10 years in the Sacramento Valley of northern California as an Acupuncturist and Chinese Herbalist, **Reine Wonite**, decided to change the path of her life in the summer of 1999. While learning graphics programming, she traveled for 4 months in her Chevy van around the western states. After a 5 day backpacking excursion to the bottom of the Grand Canyon from the North Rim, she asked a question of a man she thought was a Grand Canyon Park Ranger. He didn't know the answer and said he had not hiked to the bottom of the canyon. The man was David Elkowitz. Dave was an Interpreter Ranger, but he was at the North Rim as a fire information officer. As they got to know one another, they realized that they definitely enjoyed each other's company, and married this last September.

Reine has many skills she brings to Big Bend. She is working under Betty Alex helping with the comprehensive map of the park project. She used the Trimble Pathfinder Pro to map Castolon. She also does special media projects for Interpretation and Administration using a power point presentation. While Reine and David were in Virginia, she went to the fire academy and learned to fight wild land fires. She is on the Big Bend fire brigade and is currently training in structural fire fighting. Finally, Reine is also developing a Ranger program about the trails in the park. She has a variety of skills and loves to learn. Big Bend is the recipient of her talents.



In 1994, **Steve Wick**, started coming to Big Bend to pursue his interest in vertebrate fossils. Trips from his home in Austin became too long. Last year he and his wife bought a place outside of Terlingua, where they are building their home. He has a degree in Archeology from the University of Texas. His volunteer work at Big Bend is a professional collaboration with the park's geologist and paleontologist. He spends at least one day a week hiking in the park to locate and identify new dinosaur fossil bone sites of scientifically significant importance, and to re-evaluate old sites for erosion and vandalism. Fossils have been discovered here since the 1900's and scientists have been active in this area since the 1930's. There have been significant finds in Big Bend NP. The Aguja formation, a Spanish name meaning needle, is Steve's specialty.



Before settling down, Steve & his wife spent a few years in the Caribbean working as scuba dive instructors. Even though he loves the ocean, the desert speaks to him, and especially the treasures located within it. Big Bend is the beneficiary of Steve pursuing his passion.

**Judy Brinkerhoff** is back for her 2nd year, this time as a new bride! She married Steve Harper in August 2003. Judy and Steve dated while attending high school in Connecticut, and then lost touch with one another. Judy eventually moved to California where she bought a home in a rural area on the Russian River, 1 hour north of San Francisco. That is where she developed and fine-tuned her interest in botany. Her specialty is gardening with native species. She authors articles for the Sonoma County newspaper, *Through the Garden Gate*, and the Audubon newsletter, *Gardening with Natives*. She encourages gardening for pollination & animal habitat, and also offers wildlife gardening consultation.

Judy is currently working in Interpretation at the Magdalena House at Castolon a couple of days a week. She also works with Steve in the backcountry and as campground host at Cottonwood Campground. She is hopeful that she will be able to use her botany skills beginning in January on a project with Betty Alex. Judy is enjoying learning about this wonderful desert, both the human and the plant community.



## Matt Sandate

Matt contributes a unique combination of interests and talents to the Big Bend community. He wanted to come here with the SCA program because of the healthy music community and the river, both of which are extremely important to him. He also wanted to be in Texas for the winter, but he wasn't quite prepared for the challenge of the driving distances in this area.



Matt comes from a diverse background. His maternal grandmother is from Fukoka, Japan. His grandfather was mostly Italian. Matt's father's family was originally from Irapuato, Mexico. Although his family isn't large, they are close. He has one older sister.

Matt spent his childhood in Falls Church, Virginia, which is part of the Washington

DC metroplex. Falls Church is an old community, still retaining some cobblestone streets. During his early high school years, his father accepted a position with the Library of Congress in Dallas, TX. Very reluctantly, Matt left his friends and moved to Plano. He feared he would have to wear a cowboy hat and cowboy boots! He quickly made friends, and his guitar skills led him to join a band that played gigs throughout the state on weekends. His band was nominated for Best Funk Band in Dallas, quite an honor for a group of high school students.

Matt was awarded a scholarship to Collin County Community College, where he studied jazz for 2 years. He learned a great deal from his teachers and his fellow students. He was able to participate in state tours and jazz festivals. After leaving Collin County, he went to the University of North Texas to complete his degree in music. In addition to music, he also studied anthropology, a subject he finds extremely interesting. He graduated in the spring of 2003.

During college, Matt spent his summers working in Colorado as a river guide. After his first exposure to the river, he was hooked. He has worked as much as possible on the Colorado River, the Green River, and the Platt River, to name a few. This past summer, he worked in the SCA program at Dinosaur National Monument in Utah.

Having spent his growing up years in northern Texas, he was surprised to see the mountains in Big Bend. He is happy to be here and enjoying this area. He is learning the regional music and learning about the Rio Grande. On his days off work, he will be working with Big Bend River Tours as a trainee. Matt's future is wide open with numerous options available. His belief is that if he can remain healthy, he will be happy, no matter what he ends up doing. Big Bend National Park is affording him time to learn, while spending time doing the things he loves.



## A hike for all ages!

Four generations of **Schemms** hiked the Lost Mine Trail over Thanksgiving weekend! Bob & Carol hosted their 2 daughters, Laura & Paula, their granddaughter, Holly, and their great granddaughter, Caitlin. Eight-year-old Caitlin is turning into quite a hiker. Maybe she'll follow in her great grandparents footsteps and become a VIP!

## Activities & Events

**Cary Brown's Retirement Party-** Fri, Jan. 9, 6:00pm, PJ Community Room. RSVP & pay by Jan. 2.

**Girl Scout Cookie Sale-** Wed, Jan 14, 4:30-5:45, PJ Community Room.

### Ongoing:

**Big Bend Community Choir-** Wednesdays, 5:30 pm, Terlingua Elementary Band Room. For information call 477-2377 or 477-2442.

**Crafts -** Monday nights, 6:30-9:00 pm. PJ Community room.

Check the bulletin board at PJ for details and updates!

## VIP steps back in time!



VIP **Whit Hibbard**, and his horse **Moose**, educate park visitors about the role that fur trappers played in the history of the southwest. Whit's knowledge is evident in this engaging costumed interpretation.

The authentic accouterments Whit provides captivate the audience.

